

## CHAPTER 8

### CODE OF ETHICS FOR WRITING PORTFOLIOS

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Portfolios are a unique assessment component. They are the only a portion of the statewide assessment developed under the direction of, and evaluated by, the classroom teacher. Teachers and students are provided with the definition and examples of successful work. Although portfolio contents may vary, each entry is to be evaluated by certified personnel, trained to apply the same set of standards in the same manner from student-to-student, from school-to-school, and from year-to-year. To assure this consistency, appropriate training and monitoring of scoring practices are required. The Kentucky Department of Education provides scoring training and opportunities for scoring practice throughout the school year.

Writing pieces produced using practices that are inconsistent with this Administration Code shall not be included in a student portfolio.

Writing Portfolio Development
OK
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Teachers provide, in the course of daily instruction, opportunities for writing appropriate for inclusion in the portfolio.</li><li>2. Teachers allow ample time for preparation of portfolio entries in the classroom and may allow some student work outside of class.</li><li>3. Teachers ask questions to clarify the student's purpose, approach, meaning, content, ideas, organization, strategy, sentences, words, and mechanics.</li><li>4. Teachers may indicate the position of errors (e.g., circle errors, highlight mistakes, put checks in margins of lines where errors occur) and ask students questions about errors.</li><li>5. Teachers share and discuss with students the portfolio scoring criteria and samples of student work that exemplify those criteria.</li><li>6. Teachers discuss best pieces and possible choices for inclusion in the portfolio with students.</li><li>7. Teachers assist students in identifying a variety of tasks that address the required categories and types of portfolio entries.</li><li>8. Students shall write, type, or word process portfolio pieces by themselves, unless otherwise allowed as accommodations by 703 KAR 5: 070.</li><li>9. Teachers may assign peer tutors and others to assist students with portfolio development. All persons who provide assistance to students in portfolio development shall receive written information and training regarding how assistance may be appropriately provided.</li></ol>
NOT OK
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Any assistance or intervention from teachers, peers, or others that diminish personal ownership of the portfolio.</li><li>2. Altering documentation attesting that portfolio contents were produced by the student.</li><li>3. While it is permissible for teachers and others to mark on students' papers indicating the position of errors, no one other than the student shall make direct corrections or revisions on a student's work that is to be included in the student's writing portfolio.</li></ol>

4. Adding, subtracting, revising, or working on portfolio entries after the completion date (Minor changes to the Table of Contents are permitted.).
5. Peer tutors and others shall not provide assistance beyond that which can be provided by the teacher.

#### Portfolio Scoring

##### OK

1. Only certified school personnel who have received current Kentucky Department of Education training may provide accountability scores. For the purpose of writing portfolio scoring, certified school personnel shall include: a person with teacher or administrator certification employed by the district in a certified position; a person with teacher or administrator certification employed by the district in a classified position; or a person with teacher or administrator certification on an approved leave of absence. While student teachers may participate in the scoring process, they shall not be the scorer of record.
2. Scorers use current scoring materials and apply the scoring standards accurately and consistently.
3. Scoring judgments are made on the basis of language on the scoring guide, using benchmarks, and referring to high-end portfolios to resolve decisions about the correct performance level for a particular portfolio.
4. The district shall maintain documentation that all scorers of writing portfolios have been appropriately trained.

##### NOT OK

1. No individual shall instruct or encourage teachers to assign higher or lower scores than are warranted by the work contained within particular portfolios.
2. Scoring accuracy shall not be compromised by lack of adequate training or inappropriate scoring conditions.

## ETHICS IN MARKING STUDENT PAPERS

In a successful writing program, students have many opportunities to use writing to learn (journal entries, observation logs, reading responses) and writing to demonstrate learning to their teachers (essay/open-response questions, discussion questions, research papers, literary analyses). The *Code of Ethics for Writing Portfolios* applies **only** to the writing that is Portfolio-appropriate, not to exercises or practices. On learning exercises and practices, teachers can make corrections to teach students about writing.

An important goal of the writing portfolio is to provide students with the skills necessary to become independent thinkers and writers. All responders must consider student ownership and the response necessary to help students become better communicators and more independent editors. Responders diminish student ownership when the intention of the response is to fix the student's writing rather than to foster the growth of the writer.

### COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT MARKING STUDENT WRITING FOR THE WRITING PORTFOLIO

***What is and isn't appropriate when marking students' papers that may become part of writing portfolios?***

The *Code of Ethics for Writing Portfolios* indicates that "[t]eachers ask questions to clarify the student's purpose, approach, meaning, content, ideas, organization, strategy, sentences, words, and mechanics" and "[t]eachers may indicate the position of errors (e.g., circle errors, highlight mistakes, put checks in margins of lines where errors occur) and ask students questions about errors."

Consider the following example and the questions that follow.

*When we arived Lindsey and I wanted to ride the Vortex first. As I stod in line I never expected it to be what it was.*

***How can I help my students be better writers and not diminish student ownership?***

The following responses to the above passage preserve student ownership.

- \* A responder could write at the bottom of the paper, "You seem to be having a problem with commas after introductory elements. I have placed a check in the margin on the lines where you have a comma error. You also need to make sure you use spell check."
- \* A responder could put a circle after *arived* in the first sentence and after *line* in the second sentence to indicate an error. The responder could also circle *arived* and *stod* and write "sp" over the circles.
- \* A responder could write a note to the student on her paper that says, "You need to look in your student handbook to review how to use commas after introductory adverb clauses. Also, you have some spelling errors to correct. Proofread carefully."

These are only a few approaches; there are other ethical approaches that could be offered to this student.

### ***What can I not do?***

The following approaches diminish student ownership and, therefore, are unethical for Portfolio-appropriate writing.

- \* The responder draws a line through *arived* and *stod* and writes *arrived* and *stood*.
- \* The responder places a comma after *arived* and after *line*.
- \* The responder adds language to the student writing such as adding, “*because we had heard so much about how exciting and scary the ride was*” at the end of the first sentence.

*Text adapted from an article, “Recent Questions about Marking on Student Papers,” by Starr Lewis.*

### ***May teachers or responders circle spelling errors or write “sp” next to spelling errors?***

Yes. *The Code of Ethics* states that “teachers may indicate the position of errors.” Responders may indicate spelling errors by circling, underlining, highlighting, or other means such as putting a check mark in the margin on the line where the error appears.

### ***May responders identify run-ons and fragments for students?***

Yes. There are a number of ways a teacher might indicate these errors for students:

- \* The responder may choose to highlight the sentence and write “run-on” or “fragment” next to the sentence. Some teachers prefer abbreviations such as “R-O” or “SF.”
- \* The responder may choose to put a check in the margin and write a note to the student on the paper such as “Each place you find a check in the margin indicates a run-on or sentence fragment.”
- \* The responder may choose to write a note on the paper such as “You have a number of fragments and run-ons to correct.”

### ***May responders point out subject-verb agreement errors, pronoun-antecedent errors, overuse of passive verbs, or verb tense problems?***

Yes. Responders may circle or otherwise mark the error and identify the type of error for the student by writing “subject-verb agreement” or “verb tense problem,” etc.

### ***May responders delete unrelated information from student papers?***

No. However, responders may ask for clarification concerning the importance of information. For instance, the responder may write on the paper, “How does this relate to the point you’re making?” or “As a reader, I don’t see how this fits. Can you think of more explanation to help your reader understand why this is important?”

### ***May responders substitute more effective words for weak word choice on the part of students?***

No. However, responders may underline or highlight weak words for students and suggest that the student replace them with more effective words.